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REPORT OF SPECIAL STUDY OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PUPILS.

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TO IDENTIFY THE ETHNIC BACKGROUNDS OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PUPILS IN NEW YORK STATE, THE DIVISION OF INTERCULTURAL RELATIONS MAILED QUESTIONNAIRES TO 882 SCHOOL DISTRICTS WITH AT LEAST ONE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BUILDING. FOR THE QUESTIONNAIRE ETHNIC GROUPS WERE DESIGNATED AS "NEGRO," "WHITE," "PUERTO RICAN," AND "OTHER." AS OF THE PRINTING OF THIS REPORT, 95 PERCENT OF THEM HAD BEEN RETURNED. IT WAS FOUND THAT WHILE ONLY 33 PERCENT OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS ENROLLED ONLY WHITE PUPILS, 41 PERCENT OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS WERE ALL WHITE. THE FINDINGS OF THE SURVEY ARE SUMMARIZED IN DISTRIBUTION TABLES. THESE FINDINGS DO NOT REPORT THE ETHNIC DISTRIBUTION IN THE NEW YORK CITY SCHOOLS, WHICH WILL BE PRESENTED SEPARATELY. (NH)

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REPORT OF SPECIAL STUDY OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PUPILS

In October 1961 Commissioner James E. Allen, Jr., announced to a meeting of school superintendents at Saranac Lake that the New York State Education Department would conduct a census study of all school districts in the State which would take into account some of the ethnic backgrounds of the pupils. A necessary step in enlarging educational opportunity and in encouraging quality education in the public schools, the twin prime objectives with which the Regents and the Education Department are charged, is to know the racial composition of each elementary school building and each elementary class within a school district.

A study of this kind had not been carried out in New York before and the best available information shows no evidence that any other northern state has undertaken such a project. The United States Commission on Civil Rights in its recent report to the President and Congress recommends that a racial census be made for each State. It suggests that perhaps such a census be undertaken by the Federal Government. It can be noted that Delaware has, since it undertook to de-segregate its schools after a series of court cases declared its de jure segregation illegal, carried out a racial census of school districts. This is the only instance of an attempt to find factual data on racial imbalance of schools within a State.

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The Division of Intercultural Relations was requested to carry out the survey; a questionnaire form with covering instructions was prepared and mailed to each school district which had at least one elementary building. These instructions stated:

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

"The purpose of this census is to provide certain research and statistical data on the school population in all the school districts of the State. It is a limited census in that not all ethnic factors will be taken into account and only the elementary grades, 1-6 (inclusive), will be surveyed.

"The Superintendent, District Superintendent, or Supervising Principal of each school district can best determine the way to conduct this census for his school system. The specific points listed below are to insure that the methods applied by each school will provide data consistent with every other school in the State.

"1. The Census will only include grades 1 through 6 inclusive, and all special classes of children designated as elementary pupils. Special classes are those, graded or ungraded, for special physical handicaps; handicaps to learning, mental or emotional; any special classes organized for rapid learning; or others. Please designate these groups under column (1) grade and indicate the kind of special class.

"2. Each school building of the district which houses any elementary pupils is to be reported on a separate questionnaire.

"3. As few school personnel should be used in the census count as possible; however, complete and accurate information is essential.

"4. No pupil and no parent of any pupil shall be asked his race or ancestry.

"5. The social definition for "Negro," "white," "Puerto Rican," or "other" is to be used. This is to say that, if in the community an individual is considered to be in one of the above ethnic groups, for the purpose of this study he is so counted.

"6. No record is to be kept of this information as it relates to an individual; totals only for classrooms are to be reported."

Forms were sent to 882 districts which were reported as conducting elementary schools. At the time of this writing 838 have returned the information requested; this is 95% of all districts. Returns are still being processed as follow-up continues; some districts were mis-addressed, new centralizations had recently taken place, etc., so the non-return of a form does not mean reluctance to provide the information. A few

school districts have expressed such reluctance; however, it is believed that a near 100% return will be at hand.

There is no reference in this report to absolute numbers of "white," "Negro," "Puerto Rican," or "Other" pupils. Although totals are available from the data, these totals will not coincide with other statistical data published by the Department. The explanation for the very minor discrepancy is that all special classes were not compiled, all districts have not yet answered and in one or two cases the attendance for that day appear to be reported, not the total enrolled in a class. This, however, does not distort the results in any case since in considering ethnic or racial matters the relationship of totals to each other, that is, the percentage, is the important point. The ratio of one group to another is causative of difficulties, seeming or real, not how many individuals may be involved.

So much has been written about the public school population of New York City that this report will concentrate on the rest of the State; New York City totals and percents will be presented separately.

Excluding New York City there were 837 districts reporting. The data from each district was analyzed for all the categories used. Of all the school districts in the State 281, 33%, enrolled only white pupils; 556, 67% included more than one ethnic group although in many instances representation of others than "white" were very small, a fraction of a percent. Those 556 districts which included more than one ethnic group

were distributed in this fashion: 206, 37%., had only Negro and white pupils; 7,.01%, had only Puerto Rican and white pupils; 48, .09%., had Negro, white and Puerto Rican Pupils; 39, .07% only white and other; 111, 20%, Negro, white and other; 14, .02%, white, Puerto Rican and other; 131, 24%, had representation from all categories, white, Negro, Puerto Rican, and other. (See Table I attached.)

The diversity of New York State school population is brought into focus and perspective by the above analysis. Since considerable attention has been given to racial imbalance of schools in reference to Negro and white pupils, the data has been analyzed from this one dimension. Of all school districts reporting, 490, 58%, have both Negro and white pupils. Of these 490 districts the distribution is as follows: 234, 48%, less than 1%; 198, 40%, from 1-10% Negro; 28, 06%, from 11-20%; 15, 03%, from 21-30%; 10, 02%, from 31-40% and infinitesimal percentages above this figure. The highest concentration in any district is 61-70%. (Table II attached.) New York City has a Negro pupil population of 26%

The school districts with a Puerto Rican pupil population number 196 or 33% of all districts. Of these districts 153 or 79% have less than 1% of the total school population so designated; the remainder fall in the 1-10% category (Table III.) New York City has a pupil population of Puerto Rican youngsters amounting to 19% of the total school enrollment. A similar analysis of the category termed "other" which includes oriental as well as American Indian, shows that 395, 47%, of all districts do

include pupils from this ethnic category; however, 363 districts, 92%, have less than 1%. (Table IV.) New York City records less than 1% "other".

Far more significant than the percentage of Negro, Puerto Rican, or other pupils to white pupils in the entire school district is the relationship of one to the other in individual elementary buildings of each district. Individual school buildings have historically tended to serve neighborhoods. Especially for smaller children the nearness to school has been the usual method for drawing attendance lines. Since neighborhoods reflect housing patterns and local custom, and tradition, we will find that the individual buildings will reflect racial imbalance if such exists within a school district.

The uneveness in the distribution of the ethnic groups studied becomes more clear as the school district population is examined building by building. While a great number of districts will have only one elementary school so that all children attend the same classes together, a great number have more than one building. Here the school population is spread among several separate schools and during a school day the student groups do not associate with each other. While 33% of the school districts are all white a larger percentage of school buildings are all white, 41%. Table V shows the racial composition of the remaining 59%. Again it must be stated that many which are counted as having more than one group the percentage is often below 1% as will be

demonstrated later. Table V shows that among individual elementary buildings, grades 1-6, 36% are Negro-white, 03% are Puerto Rican-white, 14% are other-white for a total of 53% with two different ethnic groups. The remaining 47% are combinations of groups; of these 12% are schools with all groups. Two (2) school buildings in the State, excluding New York City, have a 100% minority population; one is 100% Negro, one is 100% other and the locale suggests 100% Indian.

Again the identification of Negro-white schools will be meaningful since this is the largest of the minority groups in New York State, 5% of the total elementary school population. Bi-racial schools account for 1204 or 46% of all elementary school buildings. Of this 46% some 412 buildings, 34%, the ratio is less than 1%; 546 buildings, 45%, from 1-10%; 100, 08%, from 11-20%; 41, 03% from 21-30%, and so on. (Table VI)

The number of school buildings and therefore the school districts in which the percentage of Negro to white pupils is high is very small. Of 2611 buildings in 837 school districts, excluding New York City, there are ~~105~~ 103 buildings in ~~42~~ 41 school districts in which the ratio exceeds 30%. These numbers expressed in percentages are 04% of the buildings and 05% of all school districts. If Negro and Puerto Rican are combined and this ratio recomputed, for the schools reported above there is no change in percentages or absolute numbers. Table VII lists the school districts in which the ratio of Negro to white pupils is highest for the State.

The selection of the 31% as a kind of cut-off point between schools with low and high ratio of Negro pupils to white pupils is an arbitrary one. There is no attempt to define as de-facto segregated all which exceed this percentage, rather experience dictates that from this point and beyond school districts must give added concern to what is happening in their school district. Each community is different but the questions which school authorities must ask are very similar:

Are any of these "forgotten schools?"

Is the racial imbalance affecting motivation and learning?

Are the residential patterns and population changes altering the character of the school?

Which policies and actions are to be taken to alter, impeed, or reverse the degree of racial imbalance which exists?

How best can the school and community work cooperatively to foster true integration for all school children?

This is the challenge which the Census study highlights and puts into sharper focus.

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TABLE I

Ethnic Distribution of Pupils Among School Districts
(excluding New York City)

School Dists. reporting	White only	Negro-white only	Puerto Rican-white only	Negro-Puerto Rican-white	Other-white only	Negro-Other-white	White PuertoRican-Other	ALL
837	281	206	7	48	39	111	14	131
		37%	01%	09%	07%	20%	02%	24%

33% | 67%

TABLE II

DISTRIBUTION OF NEGRO PUPILS AMONG SCHOOL DISTRICTS
(excluding New York City)

School Dists. Reporting	No. of Dists. without Negroes	No. of Dists. with Negroes	Less than 1%	1-10%	11-20%	21-30%	31-40%	41-50%	51-60%	61-70%	71-80%	81-90%	91-100%
837	347	490	234	198	28	15	10	2	2	1	0	0	0
	42%	58%	48%	40%	06%	03%	02%						

TABLE III

DISTRIBUTION OF PUERTO RICANS AMONG SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND SCHOOL BUILDINGS IN NEW YORK STATE (excluding New York City)

School Dists. Reporting	No. of Dists. without Puerto Ricans	No. of Dists. with Puerto Ricans	Less than 1%	1-10%	11-20%	21-30%	31-40%	41-50%	51-60%	61-70%	71-80%	81-90%	91-100%
837	651	196	153	42	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	77%	33%	79%	21%									

TABLE IV

DISTRIBUTION OF OTHERS AMONG SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND SCHOOL BUILDINGS IN NEW YORK STATE
(excluding New York City)

School Dists. Reporting	No. of Dists. without Other	No. of Dist. with Other	Less than 1%	1-10%	11-20%	21-30%	31-40%	41-50%	51-60%	61-70%	71-80%	81-90%	91-100%
837	442	395	363	29	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
	53%	47%	92%	07%		*	*						

* Less than 1%.

TABLE V

Ethnic Distribution of Pupils by School Buildings
(excluding New York City)

School Bldgs. Reporting	White only	Negro-white only	Puerto Rican-white only	Negro-Puerto Rican-white	Other-white only	Negro-Other white	White-Puerto Rican-Other	ALL
2595	1082	558	59	205	203	242	59	185
		36%	03%	14%	14%	16%	04%	12%
	41%	←			59%			→

TABLE VI

DISTRIBUTION OF NEGRO PUPILS BY SCHOOL BUILDINGS
(excluding New York City)

School Bldgs. Reporting	No. of Bldgs. without Negroes	No. of Bldgs. with Negroes	Less than 1%	1-10%	11-20%	21-30%	31-40%	41-50%	51-60%	61-70%	71-80%	81-90%	91-100%
2611	1407	1204	412	546	100	41	29	16	8	11	6	11	24
	54%	46%	34%	45%	08%	03%	02%	01%	005%	01%	005%	01%	02%

TABLE VII

SCHOOL DISTRICTS WHICH HAVE CONCENTRATION OF NEGRO PUPILS IN CERTAIN BUILDINGS OF THE DISTRICT
(excluding New York City)

SCHOOL DISTRICT	Elem. Bldgs. in Dists.	31-40% Negro	41-50% Negro	51-60% Negro	61-70% Negro	71-80% Negro	81-90% Negro	91-100% Negro
ALBANY	27		2	1	1	1	2	
ELMIRA	17		1					
BEACON	2	1						
POUGHKEEPSIE	7		2	1				
BUFFALO	80	1	1		1	1	1	14
LACKAWANNA	8	2					1	
ROCHESTER	43	2			3		2	2
GLEN COVE	5					1		
HEMPSTEAD 1, HEMPSTEAD	6	1				2	1	
HEMPSTEAD 8, ROOSEVELT	5							1
HEMPSTEAD 9, FREEPORT	6							1
HEMPSTEAD 12, MALVERNE	3				1			
HEMPSTEAD 15, LAWRENCE	6		1					
HEMPSTEAD 21, ROCKVILLE CENTRE	6			1				
NORTH HEMPSTEAD 1, WESTBURY	6				1			
NORTH HEMPSTEAD 6, MANHASSET	3							1

SCHOOL DISTRICT	Elem. Bldgs. in Dists.	31-40%	41-50%	51-60%	61-70%	71-80%	81-90%	91-100%
NIAGARA FALLS	24				1			2
UTICA	21			1				1
GENEVA	4	1						
SYRACUSE	33				1			1
NEWBURGH	8	1					1	1
TROY	10		1					
BABYLON 6, AMITYVILLE	5							1
SCHENECTADY	20	1						
BABYLON 9, WYANDANCH	1				1			
BROOKHAVEN 12	3	2						
EASTHAMPTON 2, WAINSCOTT	1		1					
RIVERHEAD 2, RIVERHEAD	8	3		1				
SOUTHHAMPTON	1	1						
SOUTHHAMPTON 9 BRIDGEHAMPTON	1			1				
SOUTHHOLD 1 Peconic	1	1						
KINGSTON	15	2						
WAWARSING 2	6	1						
GREENBURGH 8, GREENBURGH	3	2	1					
GREENBERG 11	1	1						
MOUNT VERNON	11		2		1	1	1	

SCHOOL DISTRICT	Elem. Bldgs. in Dists.	31-40%	41-50%	51-60%	61-70%	71-80%	81-90%	91-100%
NEW ROCHELLE	12	2		1			1	
OSSINING 1	5	1						
PEEKSKILL	6	1	1					
WHITE PLAINS	11	1		1				
YONKERS	29	1	1					

TABLE VIII

DISTRIBUTION OF PUERTO RICAN PUPILS BY SCHOOL BUILDINGS
(excluding New York City)

School Bldgs. Reporting	No. of Bldgs. without Puerto Ricans	No. of Bldgs. with Puerto Rican	Less than 1%	1-10%	11-20%	21-30%	31-40%	41-50%	51-60%	61-70%	71-80%	81-90%	91-100%
2611	2111	500	285	205	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	81%	19%	57%	41%	01%	01%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

TABLE IX

DISTRIBUTION OF OTHER PUPILS BY SCHOOL BUILDINGS
(excluding New York City)

School Bldgs. Reporting	No. of Bldgs. without Other	No. of Bldgs. with Others	Less than 1%	1-10%	11-20%	21-30%	31-40%	41-50%	51-60%	61-70%	71-80%	81-90%	91-100%
2611	1912	699	527	166	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
	74%	26%	75%	24%	0	002%	0	0	0	0	0	0	005%